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Title: Need to provide interest-free loan to tobacco farmers of Prakasam District, Andhra Pradesh.

SHRI Y.V. SUBBA REDDY (ONGOLE): Madam, I want to submit a request to provide interest-free loan to tobacco farmers of Prakasam District, Andhra Pradesh. ...(*Interruptions*)

Rain God is not showering blessings on tobacco farmers in Prakasam and other districts of Andhra Pradesh for the third consecutive year in a row. ...(*Interruptions*) Coupled with this, due to little support from the State and Central Governments, it is pushing tobacco farmers of Prakasam district to the brink of committing suicide.

Prakasam is one of the largest producers of tobacco in the country and earning crores and crores of foreign exchange to the Government of India....(*Interruptions*) It is facing severe drought conditions and tobacco crop is drying up. This has become a regular phenomenon in the last three years and farmers are screaming for help from the Central Government. ...(*Interruptions*)

To come out of the present crisis, I request the Government of India to provide interest-free loan of Rs. 1 lakh to tobacco farmers which will help them a lot. ...(*Interruptions*)

Secondly, there are very many farmers who have lost 70 per cent of their crop due to drought. Even if they get Rs. 1 lakh interest free loan they get virtually nothing. ...(*Interruptions*) In such cases, I request the Government of India to pay them compensation under drought relief through Tobacco Board which helps them to sow their next crop....(*Interruptions*)

Thirdly, the Central Tobacco Research Institute should also be involved to find out alternative crop/measures to come to the rescue of tobacco farmers....(*Interruptions*)

Lastly, I request the Government of India to immediately intervene and save tobacco farmers of Prakasam district or else, I have no hesitation to say that they may even commit suicide which they had resorted to a couple of years ago which is not a good sign for the State and the country. ...(*Interruptions*)